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ABSTRACT

Six stories told by Teddy Charlie, an Alaska native, in the Lower Tanana Athabaskan language of Minto, Alaska are presented here and illustrated with maps and photographs. A foreword offers background information on the storyteller and the recording of the stories. The six stories include: "When Minto Village First Began"; "How We Travel Among the Lakes"; "Tanning a Moosehide"; "How We Build Canoes"; "Using a Canoe"; and "How We Build Sleds." The text is presented in Athabaskan, with line-by-line translation in English. (MSE)

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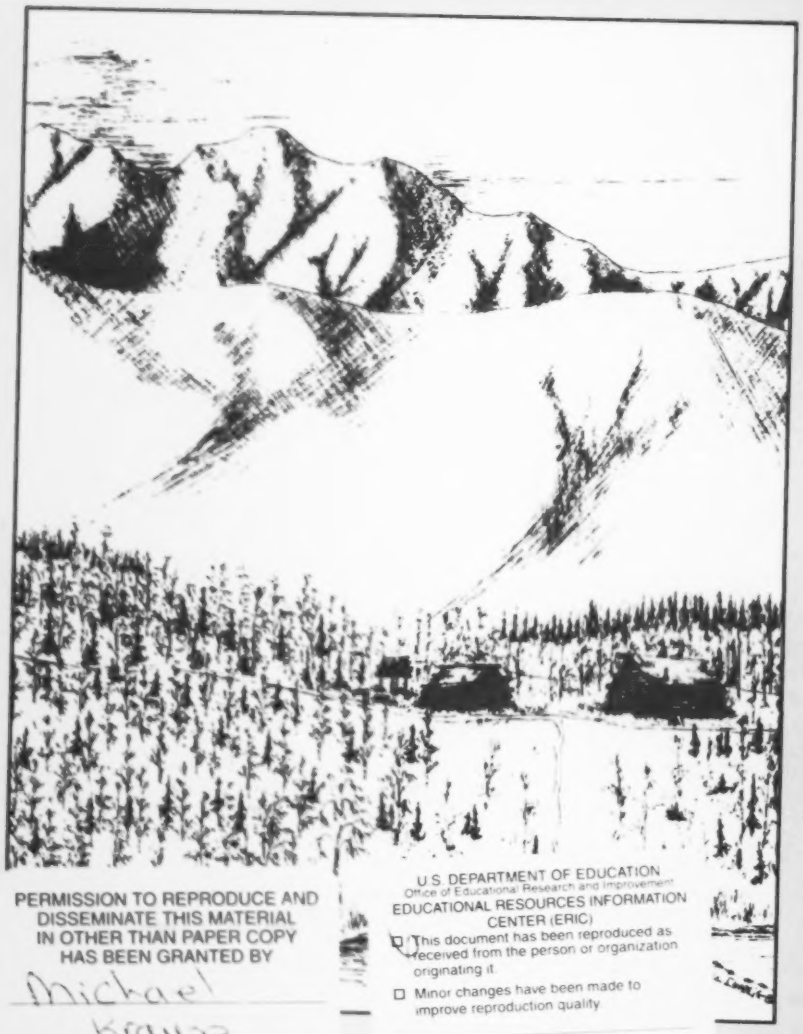
Ode Setl'oghwnh Da'
Long After I Am Gone

Stories by Teddy Charlie



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Ode Setl'oghwnh Da'
Long After I Am Gone
Stories by Teddy Charlie

Teddy Charlie (1902?–1965) with wife Mabel (1915–) in Minto, 1961.

Ode Setl'oghwnh Da'
Long After I Am Gone
Stories by Teddy Charlie

Told in Lower Tanana Athabaskan
of Minto, Alaska

Recorded and transcribed in 1961 by Michael Krauss
Edited by James Kari
Proofread and reviewed by Isabel Charlie,
Ellen Frank, and Jane McGary
Foreword by Michael Krauss

1992
Alaska Native Language Center
University of Alaska Fairbanks

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The cover drawing entitled "North Fork" by the late Eric Charlie depicts cabins at *Menok'oget*, and is just south of New Minto village. The larger cabin belonged to Chief Charlie, and this is where Teddy Charlie grew up. The smaller cabin belonged to Little Silas.

Back cover photograph: beaded moosehide boots and gloves made by Mabel Charlie. Photo by Cal White, University Relations, UAF.

Cache drawing by Kathy Charlie.

Foreword

Never could I forget this work with Teddy Charlie, thirty-one years ago now, in 1961, the beginning of my work in Alaska and with Athabaskan. I had just received a grant from the National Science Foundation for a linguistic survey of Alaska Native languages, and I chose to work on Athabaskan at Minto both because it was close to Fairbanks and because there had been until then virtually no serious work to document or preserve any record of the language in that area.

When I arrived in (Old) Minto in June of 1961 and asked around the village about who would be able and willing to sit down with me to write words and stories in the language (still a rather novel idea at that time), I was advised to seek out Teddy Charlie. This turned out to be wonderful advice.

Teddy Charlie agreed, and I soon realized I could never have found a better person to introduce me to Athabaskan. Teddy was then about sixty years old. He was the son of the well-known *Xet'eghi'o*, Chief Charlie, of Minto and a member of the Caribou Clan. He had a superb traditional command of the language and a love for it. He had a sense of its worth and so a strong sense of the purpose of the work. (See his eloquent statement of that in Chapter 1, which also gives this book its title.) Teddy was deprived of his eyesight, but his intellectual insight into the

complex regularity of his language was only the more sharpened, along with his enjoyment of the abstract and his perception of the world of sound. He had meticulous care for correctness, so was an exacting but patient teacher, that I should get his language transcribed correctly so that I could read it back exactly.

We worked several hours a day for six weeks. The first two weeks I spent learning to write down only words or phrases until I began to feel prepared to try writing down connected texts. Teddy did not consider himself an outstanding teller of the ancient legends, but he had a whole world of Athabaskan life to narrate. We would choose various ethnographic subjects, such as how to make a canoe. Teddy would think about it for a few minutes, organizing it in his mind.

I had an early-model portable (Craig 3-inch reel-to-reel) tape recorder, on which Teddy recited these texts. From that I could then play his speech back phrase by phrase for him to repeat back again to me exactly what he had said on the recording, but very slowly and clearly (and often repeatedly) for me to transcribe. The texts were so well composed and so well organized, and Teddy was so good at repeating them back to me this way, not needing to change things, that by the end of those weeks we had this remarkable group of recorded texts transcribed just as they were told on the tape. The first texts also had English translations word-by-word from Teddy, but as I began to understand the language more and more, I put down less and less translation, so the written

texts remained only partly translated. The following winter I typed them in Athabaskan in hopes of someday publishing them separately for the people of Minto and Nenana. Years filled with other responsibilities passed. Teddy Charlie died in 1965, and I was never able to go back to complete the task.

It has been my great good fortune to see my hopes fulfilled through the work of others here at the Alaska Native Language Center. So also in addition to the privilege I had of doing this work with Teddy Charlie personally, I now have the pleasure of seeing it come to publication through the work of Ellen Frank, Jane McGary, Jim Kari and Isabel Charlie, whose dedication, skill and careful review now at long last make Teddy's wish come true: "If it is written down, then it will always be preserved."

—Michael Krauss

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Ellen Frank and Jane McGary, who worked on a typescript and translation of these stories in 1982. In 1991 and 1992 I reviewed the manuscript with Isabel Charlie. Frank Blacha helped us identify several historic photos, and he wrote some of the captions. ANLC editor Tom Alton prepared the book for publication.

I especially acknowledge the encouragement of Teddy's widow Mabel Charlie and his daughter Pearl Chenar.

— Jim Kari

Jo ɬo'ots'en' nezrunh ts'en' ndenadldek.
This is beautifully written.
Eyet xwghelo jo Eric Charlie neyedenadhdhedi jo bedh'a kenak neynoxolnegi kok'a eyi dokwyi nelanh ts'e xk'ade'est'a
And this that [the late] Eric Charlie drew is what I wanted for the cover of the book that his uncle [Teddy] has written.
Jo ndeneldegi bedh'a yeghosrotil'ilą nax athdenh delanh dinot.
His uncle dedicated himself to this book while he was blind.
Nedenathdedhedi kok'a jo yex Chief Charlie yex xughila'.
The house on the cover drawing belonged to Chief Charlie.
Eyet xwghwnh k'wda xuzrunh ts'en' ba'ał niłteghw xwdeghadlnenh.
Now this is nicely put together.

— Mabel Charlie

Ode Setl'oghwnh Da'
Long After I Am Gone

CHAPTER
1

TTHAXW MENHTI KAYEX
WHEN MINTO VILLAGE FIRST BEGAN

Tthaxw Menhti kayex xwtadletsinh de'onh, yex xodeghonhdenh jonh ts'eba tr'anił'o.
When Minto village first began, there used to be a grove of spruce where the houses are built.
Dexeghoda lo jonh kayex nixwdalnenh.
That's why there was a village here.
K'wda k'odit school xa'ał k'w nixunidak.
Now a school also has been built.
Nonoch'endedekdenh chuk'w nixunidak.
Also an airfield was built.
Nedeneldegi denaghwnh nonodedexde chu dexudeyok.
Also mail delivery came to us.
Denaghwnh nonoch'endedek ts'exa'eł.
We also have an airfield.
Niłdho:t de'onh dats'en' tr'exwnił'iląh.
Long ago we never saw anything like this.
Tr'inina esdlanh de'onh k'odit xe'ał
From when I was a child to now
ts'ets'en' tr'exwtinotl-'ilą ts'en' denalotl'eghw k'wda xwdolnenh.
things have come to us that we did not expect to see.
Tr'exwghineyh ts'en' xwch'onhts'en' k'odit denalotl'eghw xwdolnenh.
The life we lived is different from the life we have now.

Tr'utthat xwch'onhts'en' nixwdalnenh k'odit.
Now it has changed from the original times.
Denadena' ka chugwt dena'udhiłtth'oną.
Our children don't even understand us.

Teya' xa'ał tr'esdenigą dexa'ał noxwtadhejenek.
Although I don't know things thoroughly, I will begin to narrate.
Tr'utthat kwnega' chu teya' eł tr'esdenigą.
I don't know the original stories really thoroughly.
Yochwx chugwt xdeghini'.
They talk of 'Big Sky'.

***Menhti Xwghotthit*, Old Minto, on the Tanana River in about 1918, just after the village was established. Tents were placed beyond these cabins for the people to live in as they built their cabins. The trees in the background were cut for firewood and to build houses. The area where these houses stood has been washed away by erosion of the riverbank. The six houses shown here belonged to, left to right, William Jimmie, Silas, Little Peter (husband of Lena, who is shown working on the canoe in the photo on page 18), Little Charlie, Linus, and Moses Charlie. Off the photo to the left was Chief Charlie's house.** Ben Mozee Photograph Collection, (acc. #79-26-614N) in the Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Nu'a chugwt xdeghini'.
They also talk of Nu'a.
Dotrotsela chugwt xdeghini'.
They also talk of Raven.
Exwna xebenokwnega' xughila'.
There were stories about them.
Eyi nedenildegą dexeghoda xenotr'edlenek k'ah dexut'a.
Since these haven't been written down, it seems that we are forgetting them.
Et'eło denakenaga' ghełniyi eł ch'exutolał łonh denh.
And now there is a way to record our language.
Yegu ndayi nena' koget xa'ał k'w niłtr'udhadltth'onh ts'e chugwt dexudeyok.
It also happened that we can understand each other from all over the country.

Yeget tr'utthat de'onh xełdi' yegu tr'enuneya detthek ts'e k'w tlanh nił'ighel'an' xwdi.
They say that in the original times all the animals were friends with one another.
Ts'e k'w exw dontha' k'w niłloyet k'w kwnek odenh k'w xulanh.
And so since ancient times the stories go on one after another.
Yeget tthaxw kwnek dletsinh denh eyi yeget tthaxw kwnek xadadiltth'et denh dats'en' de'it'alą ghwla'i k'odit xełdi'.
But now it isn't like that when the stories were first made and when the stories first started.
Chugwt ts'ets'en' chugw xwghwnh noxexwlnek ghwla' da' chugwt xa'ał tr'esdenigą.
Now they might tell them differently and I don't know them either.

This is one of the camp areas of Old Nenana, used long before this photo was taken in about 1910. This is on the north side of the river, near the site of the present highway bridge. *Toghotili* hill is on the left. Albert J. Johnson Photograph Collection (acc. #89-166-729N) in the Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Nedenadldek da', xełdi' yeget exwts'exwk'a k'ah detot'ał.
If it is written down, then it will always be preserved.
K'odit dats'en' dent'ayi nedenadldegi note'oyi note'oyi xwghila'ą.
At this time there are no written materials such as these available.
Niłghwna ba'ał notr'eghwlneyenh chugwt xwghithdla'ą ts'en',
If no one continues as storytellers,
detthek ts'en' k'wda yeget tr'utthat xwyit xughi'o' ts'en' xenotr'edlnex k'ah dexudeyok.
then it will be as if we have forgotten everything from the first times.

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Ts'e yegu exw xekenaga' detthek ts'en', xek'oneya' detthek ts'en' xa'aɬ k'wda nech'edenadldek ts'e
And all of their language and all of their deeds, however, are being written down now.
xa'aɬ k'w xwloyi xwdegholnenh.
that is beginning to occur.
Wxts'en' sekenaga' chugw ndats'en' dexughiɬdhot xwghwla' k'w ode setl'oghwnh da' k'w chugwt utedholtth'iɬ ghwla'i.
It may be possible that long after I am gone my language will be understood.
Lo jo be'aɬ beghwnh k'otr'ideniyi.
This is what we are working on.
Xuzrunh ts'e deghit'a' da', xuzrunh ts'en' dedeyok da' xeyetoɬtsiɬ ts'en',
If it is done well, if they make it turn out well,
xeye'aɬ deneyh ts'en' lo jo xeyeghwnh k'o'ideneyh.
they can know it, and work on it.
Ndanh giga' dranh ghwla' denakenaga' ndenadldegi xutolaɬ ts'en'.
Some day perhaps our language will be written.
Nixwdoldheyh ghwla' ts'en' xwk'ah teghw lo jo dedesni.
I am saying this now so that this may happen.
Deba ghwla' sek'atl'ot chugw xwghwnh k'otodeneyh ghwla'
Someone else, too, will perhaps be working on it in my place,
ch'edenh ninesyo da'.
after I should go to another place.
Deba sre'u sek'ah k'w dedinenh.
I hope there is someone who talks like me.

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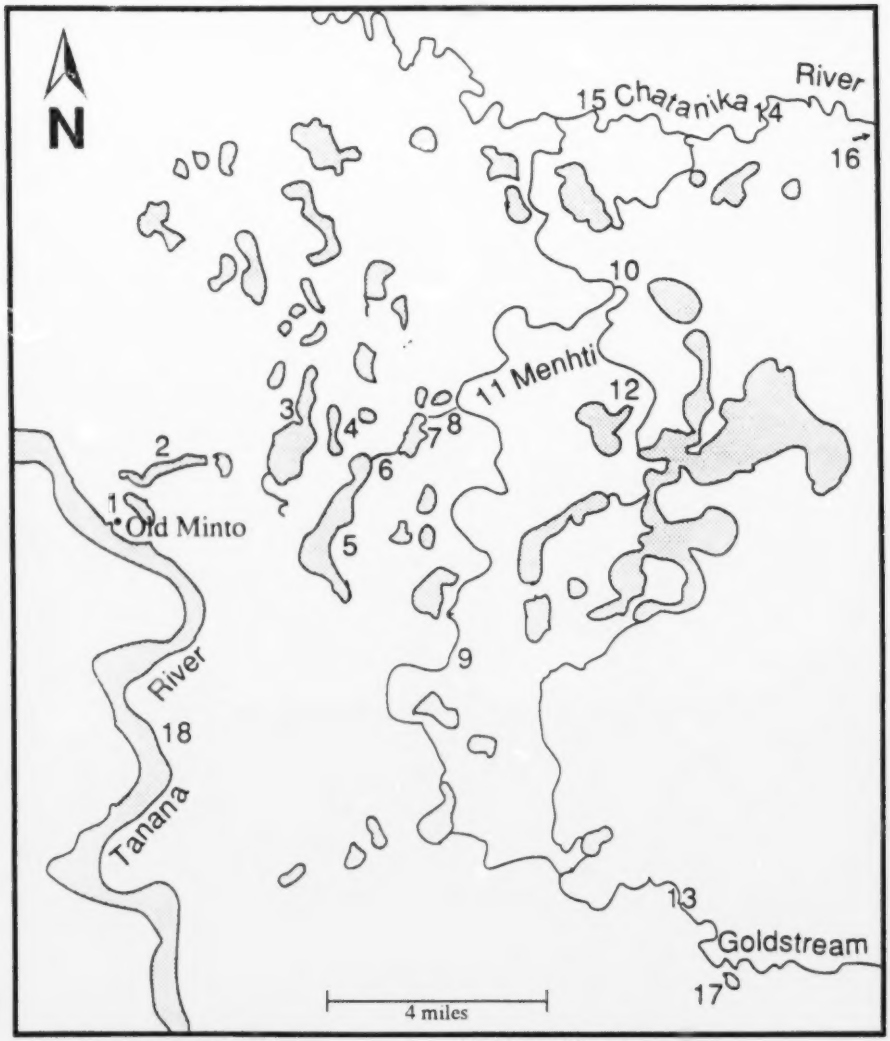
Xutl'eth ts'en' be'ał k'oyideneyenh beghwnh nidaldheyh, jo segena'.
It should be someone who works hard on it, my friend.[†]
Teya' xwghwnh xeteghesyał ts'en' dexutht'a'ą.
I am not talking about this thoroughly.
Detthek ts'en' yegu ndats'en' xwghwnh xetadhesya' da' xedodedheghesneyą.
If I started talking about everything, I'd never stop talking.
Jo giga' xwk'ah xwyą' k'w dedeghesnił.
So this is as much as I will say.

† Referring here to Michael Krauss.

Fish camp at the mouth of the Tolovana River, 1919. This is one of the places Chief Alexander's band stayed. Note the large canvas canoes and Chief Alexander's house on the far right. Archie Lewis Collection (acc. #896-64) in the Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.



1. Menhti Xwghotthit *Old Minto*
2. Tr'adani'oyi *Long Lake*
3. Tonełkwn' Mena' *Clear Lake*
4. Teyh K'ech'idet'otthde *All Hand Hill*
5. Benh K'wxchwx *Big Lake*
6. Toghwghwkxw *stream between Big Lake and Beaver Dam Lake*
7. Dotr'iyhdeltlek Mena' *Beaver Dam Lake*
8. Teyh Tethde *hill portage*
9. Toltthwgha Nik'a *middle Goldstream*
10. Dwxtso Dedhdlodenh *cache site*
11. Menhti *Minto Lakes area*
12. Menhtwx No' *lower Goldstream and Minto Lakes outlet*
13. Xwdodliyi Nik'a *upper Goldstream*
14. Dradlayi Nik'a *Chatanika River*
15. Bezreya' Tr'enotigheltonh *Cooper's place on lower Chatanika*
16. Xwlenh Kayex *current rapid village on upper Chatanika near Hayes Creek*
17. Ch'eda' Dedhtonh Mena' *lake near Dunbar*
18. Tth'itu' *Tanana River*

CHAPTER
2

MENHTI K'OTR'EDENAYH TS'EN'
HOW WE TRAVEL AMONG THE LAKES

A description of the canoe routes from Old Minto to Minto Lakes sites and the trails and eastern limits of the territory of the Minto Band. Numbers in brackets refer to locations on the map on page 8.

Menhti Xwghotthit xe'uzra' ghila' denh lo jo village xulanh de k'odit.
The place called [1] 'down below the lakes' [Old Minto] is where there is a village now.
Jo giga' xwts'en donga' Tr'adani'oyi be'uzra' eyi lo benotr'etr'edilyayh.
Upland from there at a the place named [2] 'the one extending out linearly' [Long Lake] we would come out carrying things (canoes).
Eyi k'et donga' yonget nidani'odenh dona' toteth lo chugw
Upland of where this ridge terminates and then up-stream at another portage
Tonełkwn' Mena' chugw ts'en' toteth enotr'etr'elyayh.
we carry canoes over the portage to [3] 'clear water lake' [Clear Lake].

Eyi k'et donona' nonotr'ededek delo chu toteth xulanh.

Across from that place we travel across to where there is another portage.

Iga' don'a lo Teyh K'ech'idet'otthde dexwts'en' toteth.

Upriver from here is a portage up to [4] 'hill where something is cut in two' [All Hand Hill].

Eyi yonit nidani'o denh don'a lo k'wda Benh K'wxchwx.

That (portage) extends upriver then to [5] 'big lake' [Big Lake].

K'edonona' nonotr'ededek.

We go across on it.

Dedonga' lo k'wda Toghwghwkxw xe'uzra' xwchugw notr'etededek.

Now upland there we return to the place named [6] 'water plant place' [stream between Big Lake and Beaver Dam Lake].

Xwdonga' odek'w dinot k'w k'wda Dotr'iyhdeltlek Mena' enotr'edidedek.

Then further on upland now we come out onto [7] 'canoe-slides-in lake' [Beaver Dam Lake].

Eyi yek'et donona' nonotr'ededek xwlo k'wda Teyh Tethde

We travel across on that one and then there at the end at [8] 'hill portage' [at Beaver Dam Lake outlet]

dotthena' Toltthwgha Nik'a chu xek'ah notr'ededek.

down below we come back to [9] 'yellow water river' [middle Goldstream Creek].

Toltthwgha Nik'a dontha:' k'w odenh dinot lo k'w k'wda yonthet Dwxtso Dedhdlodenh

All the way from [9] 'yellow water river' [middle Goldstream] out to [10] 'where there are caches' [Cache site]

iga' logw k'wda Menhti xe'uzra' de
is where there is the name [11] 'among the lakes' [Minto Lakes]
Menhtwx No' xe'uzra' denh.
and the name [12] 'among-the-lakes stream' [lower Goldstream Creek and the outlet stream of the largest of the Minto Lakes].
Dwxtso Dedhdlo k'wda tonotr'ededek.
We come again to [10] 'where there are caches' [Cache site].
Exwdon'a lo k'w Xwdodliyi Nik'a don'a chugw xughila' xw xulanh.
Next upriver from there is [13] 'cold enters river' [upper Goldstream Creek].
Menhtwx No' dode'o chu Dradlayi Nik'a k'w k'adanilenh xw.
Downstream from [12] 'among the lakes-stream' [lower Goldstream] [14] 'round whitefish river' [Chatanika River] flows in.
Exwdonona' Bezreya' Tr'enotigheltonh ghw xa'ał lo k'w detthek ts'e k'w tr'iyh tenet xulanh xw k'w niłloyet.
Next across at [15] 'where otter has a trail that comes out' [Cooper's Place on lower Chatanika River] are canoe trails from one to another.
Benh ndadlyo xw k'w notr'ededek.
We travel along a series of lakes connected end-to-end.
Dradlayi Nik'a donga' xełdi' yonget Xwlenh Kayex dexk'ah xwyą' lo tr'iyi ninotr'odedek.
We used to travel up 'round whitefish river' [Chatanika River] in a canoe only to [16] 'rapids village' [site on Chatanika River near the mouth of Hayes Creek].
Ts'e Xwdodliyi Nik'a don'a xełdi' yoni:t
And up on [13] 'cold enters river' [upper Goldstream Creek], upstream

Ch'eda' Dedhtonh Mena' xwdon'a xek'ah lok'w ninotr'odedek.
we used to go upstream to [17] 'antler is there lake' [lake on south side of Goldstream near Dunbar].
K'wda exw xwn'a kwlą ts'en' nixwdalnenh.
Recently that stream has disappeared.
K'odit xełdi' — degw donga' xwyh tena xughila' xw xwyą' lo,
Now though — there was just a winter trail in that upland country [Goldstream Valley above Dunbar],
k'wda sanh tena tr'exuditsinh.
but now we have made a summer trail.
Ęhę'.
Yes.
K'wda.
That's all.

CHAPTER
3

DENIGI DHETH EDHIX TS'EN'
TANNING A MOOSEHIDE

Yeget denigi uko nołto' tr'etel'iyh ti
Whenever we hunt for moose,
sanh buko nołto' tr'el'anh ti,
whenever we hunt it in summer,
bek'ah dotr'edli ts'e k'w denaghwnh niyoyh.
we imitate its call and it comes to us.
Iga' k'w tı'edhełghayh.
And then we kill it.
Ts'e k'w netr'eł'wł.
Then we butcher it.
Ts'e bek'wx eł detthek ts'en' benelana' detthek ts'e k'w ek'otr'enałtoyh.
And then we carefully take care of all its fat and all its meat.

Bedheth chugw xuzrunh ts'en' ek'otr'enałtoyh.
We also take care of its hide well.
K'wda tr'iyit notr'elayh ts'en' benotr'elkayh.
Then we load it into canoes and we paddle back with it.
Iga' k'wda yegi ch'edheth xodedet'oth.
Then the hair is cut off that skin.
Iga' tl'oghenh xełdi' k'wda benelana' uko lettheyh.
Then after that, then, the flesh is scraped off.

Iga' tl'oghenh xełdi' k'wda leja.
And then next it (the skin) is scraped smooth.
Iga' tl'oghenh xełdi' k'wda dotoghelneyh.
And afterwards it is hung up.
K'wda neghadlgwnh tl'oghenh xełdi' k'wda łet koget dedhtonh.
Then after it is dry, it is placed over smoke (on a frame).
Xech'edi'onh xw k'w dedhtonh.
It is placed where it is sunny.

Iga' tl'oghenh k'wda tonoxeyeghełneyh.
After that they place it in water.
Ts'e k'w tr'edhwx dinot k'w nodedegoyh.
And then as we scrape it, it dries.
Ts'e k'wda łet k'et doghelneyh.
And then it is put up in the smoke.
Ts'e noxeyedotił ts'en' dinot k'w drana odenh.
And they keep turning it over all day long.

Sophia Titus tanning a moosehide in Nenana sometime before 1910. Walter and Lillian Phillips Album (acc. #85-72-83N) in the Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

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Ts'e k'wda ch'etthighon' yit tu yit toghelneyh ts'ek'w eyi eł teddha dhek.
Then it is soaked in (fermented) brains, in water, and stays there all night.
Exw k'ode'onh xełdiyex k'w tr'ugath.
And then early the next morning we wring it out (on a stick).
Ts'e k'w donototr'eghatlneyh ts'e
And then we hang it up again (over a pole) and
tr'edhwx dinot k'w nodedegoyh.
we scrape it while it dries again.
Tl'oghenh chugw łet koget chugw donoghelneyh.
After that, once more it is put over the smoke.
Nodathdegwnh tl'oghenh ts'iłde drana łet koget donoghelneyh.
After it is entirely dry, it is put over the smoke for one day.
Dwxtl'oghenh exw teddha k'w
And after that the next evening
chu ch'etthighon' yit tonoghelneyh.
it is soaked again in the brain water.

Iga' xełdi' k'wda ło'ets'e beghwnh k'otr'ideneyh dinot k'w,
And now we work very hard on it during this time,
beghwnh k'otr'ideneyh dinot k'w nodedegoyh.
we work on it until it dries.
Ts'e k'w k'wda edhix.
And so now it is tanned.
Exw k'ode'onh k'wda toxeyiłtthux.
Then the next day they color it brown (with smoke).
Toxeyiłtthux,
They color it brown,
ts'ek'w k'wda ch'edheth edhix de.
and then the hide is all tanned.

Yeget xwts'en' tthaxw netr'etr'eɬ'wɬ dwxts'en' yeget edhax de
From the time we first butcher it until it is tanned,
xek'oneya' ɬo'ets'en' nechox.
it is really hard work.
Iga' lo k'w k'wda katreth, dretr be'aɬ deghonhde.
Now then moccasins and mittens are made with it.
Xoldon'ti chugw xeyentthek, tl'ul'a noɬto'.
Sometimes they cut it into strips for babiche.
Nelani xeɬdi' k'w tr'eɬgwnh.
Then we dry the meat.
Neghadlegwnh ts'e lo k'w tr'edhdlo.
When it dries we store it.
Ęhę', k'wda.
Yes, that's all.

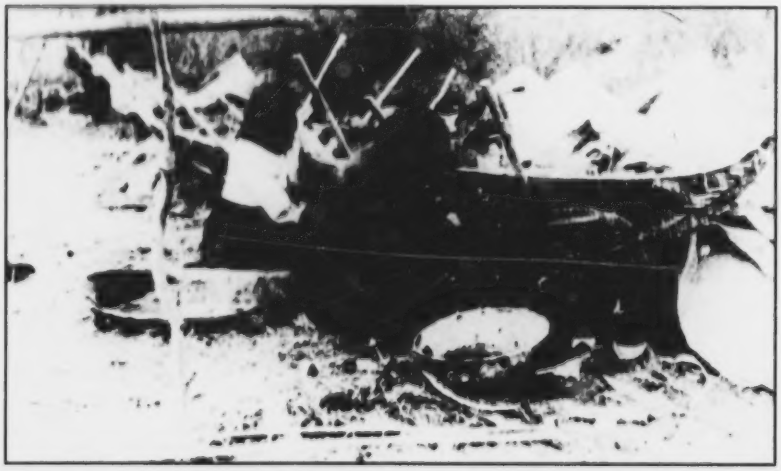
CHAPTER
4

TR'IYH TR'EŁTSIYH TS'EN'
HOW WE BUILD CANOES

Tr'iyh tr'eltsiyh ts'e xeghwnh noxwtadhejenek.
I am going to tell about how we make canoes.
Tthaxw tr'iyh tr'eteltsiyh de yeget tthaxw ch'edegheyh ts'eba ts'en' tr'uneyh.
First, when we start to make a canoe, first we get a top rail of spruce.
Ch'entthatl chugwt eyi ka tthaxw.
And the end pieces (curved parts), those too are first.
Iga' tl'oghenh lo k'wda ts'eba dizruni uko notr'exwtelyayh,
And now, after that, we search for a good spruce tree,
tth'idh'oyi.
a straight one.
Eyi xeldi' k'wda dratr'edeljeyh.
That, then, we split in half.
Drantr'edeljoyh.
We split it into two pieces again.
Ts'e k'w tr'edeghełkoyh.
And then we hew it into shape.
K'wda tr'iyh delesr nołto' tr'edeghełkoyh tl'oghenh
Then after we hew out the canoe planks,
k'wda degwnh tl'oghenh xeldi' k'wda tr'edelzrayh.
and after it dries, then we plane it.

Ch'edegheyh chugw yeget detot'ał ts'en' k'w benitr'etr'edeltsiyh,
We also carve what will be the toprail,
dethgwną dinot.
while they (the planks) are not yet dry.
Ts'ek'w k'wda ch'enteth beyi łatontr'ettheyh.
At that time we install the crosspieces into it.

Yeget ch'edegheyh xuzrunh ts'en' detr'eliyh.
We adjust those toprails (gunwales) very well.
Tl'oghenh k'wda yeget ch'entthatl ch'etl'odheyi nitr'etiyh xw,
After that we install the end pieces and the bottom center planks,
k'wda ch'entthatl nilch'ots'enh beghwnh nitr'edelayh.
then we fasten the end pieces on at each end.



Lena Peter, left, and Bessie Solomon applying pitch and sewing a canoe sometime before 1910. Note the large birchbark basket, on the left. Charles Bunnell Collection (acc. #68-50-70) in the Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Iga' tl'oghenh k'wda yeget ch'edegheyh beghwnh nitr'edatiyh.
Now after that, we set down that toprail (gunwale) onto it.
Eyi ghot yeget ch'entthatl beghot yenitr'eghadhnik ts'e.
Then we even up the end pieces.
Xuzrunh ts'e tth'idega' ts'e xenighi'o ts'en' xeghoda xwyą' nezrunh.
It extends nice and straight in order for it to be good.

De'itht'a'ą da' xełdi' ts'iłts'ena beyit todekał ode k'w.
If it is not done that way, however, it will always paddle off to one side in it.
Iga' xwch'o' tl'oghenh, k'wda yeget tr'iyh nitl'odetiyh de.
So, having prevented that, then that canoe is set down on its bottom.
Xwlo k'wda beyit ch'eghwts leyayh.
Then the ribs are installed in it.
Ch'eghwts k'iyh lo ch'eghwts nelanh, xoldon'ti k'wy'.
The ribs are of birch, or sometimes willow.
Yeget ch'entthatl xełdi', ch'egaddha' ch'edatlghwdi.
That end piece, however, is a main spruce root, a curved one.
Ts'e k'wda yeget ch'edelesr batr'edelayh.
And then we fasten the planks into it.
Beyit ch'eghwts leyayh tl'oghenh nił'ogho:t k'w tenelyayh,
After the ribs are in it and they are bent exactly even with one another,
tl'oghenh k'wda ch'edelesr badelyayh.
after that then the planking is put in.
K'wda detthek ts'en' letr'etr xuzrunh ts'en'.
Then it is nailed nicely all around.

Delniyh tl'oghenh k'wda ch'edegheyh yega' xadetiyh, nixeyedetiyh.
After that is done, then they set the toprail into it and turn it over.
K'wda detot'aɬ ts'e xeghenit.
Then that is how it will be.

Yeget nixeyedetiyh de lo,
When they set it (the toprail) in permanently,
k'wda ło'ets'e yeget ts'iɬts'ena yega' xwditonh ts'exwch'onh ts'exa'aɬ
to prevent one side from dropping down too low, or
yeget itodegeth ts'e xwch'onh ts'e xa'aɬ
to prevent it from getting twisted
k'w beghot yenitr'eghadhnik.
we examine it all over.
Xuzrunh ts'en' notr'enel'iyh.
We examine it carefully.
Xwlo k'wda ch'eghwts benteth endeniltr'etr.
Thus the ribs are nailed to the end pieces.
K'wda yeget dedotiɬ de yeget nezrunh ts'en', xek'ah k'w beghwnh k'otr'ideneyh.
So that it will be a good one, that is how we work on it.

Dinot lo k'w beghwnh k'otr'ideneyh dinot k'w tr'eɬtsiyh.
We work on it until we have finished making it.
Dexeghoda xwyą' nezrunh tr'iyh.
Only by these means is it a good canoe.
Detr'iɬdheną da' xeɬdi' ts'iɬts'ena bedegheyh yega' xeyedotiɬ ts'en'.
If we don't take care, however, the toprail will be low on one side.

Xuzrunh ts'en' nel'aną ts'e detot'aɬ, xuzrunh ts'e chugw beyit k'otr'etothdekayą dwxwch'o'.
If it does not look good, it will hinder us from traveling nicely in it.

Ts'eba yą' lo k'w tr'iyh letsiyi.
The canoe is made only of spruce.
Ch'eghwts xeɬdi' k'iyh.
The ribs are of birch.
Dechenh notik'a yą' lo beghwnh t'oxwdiɬt'a.
Only two kinds of wood, then, are used for it.

Yeget to'oyi chugwt beto'oya' chugw yeget ts'eba ts'en' lo to'oyi tr'eɬtsiyh.
As for the paddle, its paddle we also make that of spruce.
K'wda detthek ts'e xuzrunh ts'en' letsiyh tl'oghenh xeɬdi',
Then after everything has been well made,
k'wda bekoget xuzrunh ts'en' begho tr'edegheɬtsiyh tl'oghenh,
and after we sand its surface nicely,
k'wda bach'ughelneyh.
the (canvas) covering is put on it.
K'wda bach'ughelneyh tl'oghenh xeɬdi' k'wda eyi chugw dedebenh.
Then after the covering is put on, it is also painted.
Notixde k'w nodedebiyh xw.
It is painted twice.
K'wda ultlet ts'e deneyh.
Now it is slick.
Ts'iɬde xwyą' dedebenh de xeɬdi' bekoget tr'oxutlagą ts'en' tr'e'ultledą.
When it is painted only once, however, its surface is not good, it is not slick.

Yeget dosji ło'ets'e łedelyo dexeghoda xwyą' chu beghwnh ne'ethch'elą.

Those planks are really lined up together, that's how it won't tear (the canvas).

Jo yeget tr'iyh tr'ełtsiyh ts'e xwyą' lo xeghwnh noxwghejenek.

Now I've told you only about how we make that canoe.

K'wda.

That's it.

CHAPTER
5

TR'IYH T'OXWDIŁT'A TS'EN'
USING A CANOE

K'wda yeget xa'ał tr'iyh t'oxwdiłt'a ts'en' chugw xeghwnh xeteghesyał.
Now, I am going to talk about how they use the canoe, too.
Tr'eltsiyh tl'oghenh beyit nołto' tr'el'anh.
After we have made it, we go hunting in it.
Beyit chugw yegu ntudhe'o' ts'e notr'etedekayh.
And we paddle around in it wherever the water extends (in a canoe route).
Tth'ide'o chugw beyit nich'otr'ekayh.
We paddle directly downstream in it.
Tth'inona' chu beyit notr'ekayh.
We paddle straight across rivers in it too.
Benhti chuk'w notr'etedetiyh ts'exwk'w beyit k'otr'edekayh.
We also carry it between the lakes and so in that way we paddle all over in it.
Yegu sanh ti yegu netudhe'o' ts'e detthek ts'e k'w beyit notr'iyhdeldheyh.
Then in the summer when there is open water, we get everywhere in a canoe.
Ts'e xwghenit lo tr'eltsiyh.
And that is why we have made it.

Ndagu yegu xun'a nexwdhdonh xw detthek ts'e lo k'w beyit notr'iyhdeldheyh.
Wherever the water system goes, we travel everywhere in it.
Ts'e xwghenit lo tr'eɬtsiyh.
That is why we have made it.

Beyit chugw ch'enotr'etelkayh.
We also haul loads in it.
Nedodhi notr'etelkayh.
We carry heavy loads.
Eɬtr'iyh xw tot xw xa'aɬ k'w beyit notr'etededek.
When it is windy and waves are high, even then we go around in it.
Tono don'a chugw beyit notr'ekayh.
We also can paddle upriver against the current in it.

Unidentified man in birchbark canoe, probably on Tanana River. Date unknown. Museum Transfer Collection (acc. #73-66-149) in the Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Dept., University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Tono don'a chugw nedodhi beyit tr'edhdlo ts'e k'w notr'etedekayh.
We even put heavy loads in it and take them upriver against the current.
Xudoth ts'e beyit notr'exwlayi lo tr'iyh ts'e xeghwnh lo tr'eɬtsiyh.
We make that canoe so that we can carry heavy loads around in it.
Ts'e bet'oxwdighiɬt'a'.
That is how it was used.

Tabiɬ ghwnh xa'aɬ bet'otr'ediɬt'a.
We use it for net (fishing) as well.
Netr'etr'eko' ts'e xeghwnh xa'aɬ bet'oxwdighiɬt'a'.
We would use it for dip-netting as well.
Yeget xa'aɬ tr'exwneyh detthek ts'e xeghwnh k'w beyit k'otr'ideneyh ts'e
For making our living, for all the work that we do,
xeghenit lo tr'eɬtsiyh.
for these things we made it.
Ẹhẹ', k'wda.
Yes, that's it.

CHAPTER
6

XWTL TR'EŁTSIYH TS'EN'
HOW WE BUILD SLEDS

Yeget xwtl tr'ełtsiyh ts'en'.
This is (how) we make a dogsled.
Xeghwnh xwtl t'oxwdighiłt'a' ts'e xeghwnh noxwtadhejenek.
I will tell you how one uses a dogsled.
Tthaxw lo k'iyh uko notr'exwtelyayh,
First we look around for a birch,
tth'idh'oyi bedhuchena' kwląyi.
a straight one, without (many) branches.
Eyi tr'editiyi k'wda drantr'edela'.
Having found that, then we split it (into pieces).
Eyits'enh logu k'wda xwtl chenh tthaxw tr'edeghonh.
After that, then, first we make the sled runners.
Ts'ek'w tr'etenlayh.
And then we bend them.
Ts'ek'w degwnh dinot k'w,
And then while they're drying,
xwtl kachena' chugwt eyi chugw drantr'edełjoyh ts'en'.
we split the sled stanchions too.
Tr'edeghełkoyh ts'en'.
We hew them into shape.
Ts'ek'w dotr'edelayh ts'e degwnh.
We put them up somewhere and they dry.

Iga' tl'oghenh xeɬdi' k'wda xwtl tthink'ayi, xwtl delesr, xwtl tsinbogha' eɬ
Well, after that, then, the sled toprail, the bed slats, and the side slats,
detthek ts'ek'w ts'iɬdenh k'w tr'etenlayh.
all those then we will bend at one time.
Eyi chugw degwnh.
These too are drying.
Ts'e k'wda yegu deneyhde dranh k'w dedadhdlo xw k'wda degwnh.
And then they are left for about four days, and then they are dry.

Xwlo k'wda niɬk'antr'edeɬt'oth detthekts'en'.
And then we chisel out holes all around it.
K'w k'wda niɬk'andelt'oth tl'oghenh k'wda
After it is chiseled out
xuzrunh ts'e nitr'edelayh ts'e k'wda
then we assemble it carefully and
xwtl kachena' xentr'edeɬtl'u'.
we lash on the sled stanchions.
Detthek ts'e.
All of them.
Xwtl dotu' eɬ.
Along with the handle bars.
Ts'ek'w k'wda xwtl k'w tr'etl'u.
And then we lash the sled together.
Yeget xwtl chenh chugw xuzrunh ts'en' niɬ'oghot k'w deghit'a' dinot lo k'w tr'eɬtsiyh.
Those sled runners also must be kept very even while we are making it.
Xwtl tthink'ayi chugw ditl'eth ts'e detr'iɬdhenh.
We also make the toprails to be strong.

Notixde dranh beghwnh ło jo tr'eghedenoyh xw k'wda tr'ełtsiyh.
We work on it for two days, and then we have it ready.
K'wda yeget xwtl tr'ełtsiyh tl'oghenh xełdi'
Then after we have made that sled,
yeget xeghwnh tr'ełtsiyh ts'en'
having made it,
ło'ets'e bet'oxwdiłt'a.
one really uses it a lot.

Yegu niłdhot ti denigi etr'elax ti chugwt eyi beyit notr'elghwk.
If we we kill a moose far away somewhere, we haul that back in it.
Duł chuk'w yex beyit ninotr'edelghwk.
We also haul firewood back home in it.
Yongw niłdho:t xw hał dhedlo xw xa'ał k'w beyit notr'etedenayh.
When trapping very far (from home), then we also move (our gear) in it.
Hał tr'edhdlo xw xa'ał chuk'w notr'etetiyh.
We drive it where we set traps.
Exwtl bek'et donotr'exulayh ts'ek'w łika k'w noyetedetiyh.
Also we load things on it and then the dogs pull it around.
Łika k'w nodenatelghwk yeget xwtl koget,
The dogs can haul us around on that sled,
nedodhl bekoget dedhdlo dexa'ał k'w.
even with a heavy load on it.
Xwtl athdenh da' xełdi' zrit tr'o'wsr ts'en' da' xełdi'.
Without a sled, though, we would barely be able to walk.

Dats'en' dexwghiłchwx ts'en' denalotl'eghwt xwtoth'olą.
With something large it would not be easy for us.
Dexeghwnh lo yeget xwtl t'otr'ediłt'a.
That is why we use that sled.

Ndagu yegu tena xulanh xw
Wherever there is a trail,
ts'iłwx ło k'w łika bedotr'edilayh ts'e
quickly then we hitch up the dogs and then
xwlo k'w łika eł k'w bet'otr'ediłt'a.
we use the sled with dogs.
Ts'e xwghenit lo xwtl tr'et'anh.
That is why we have the sled.
Bek'et chuk'w notr'etedenayh.
We also move around on it.
Łoʼets'en' yeget tr'iyh t'oxwdiłt'a ts'e xwk'ah k'w dent'ayi lo xwtl.
It is used very much like a canoe, that is the way the sled is.
Ęhę', k'wda.
Yes, that's it.

Xwyh ti łoʼets'en' edenh yą' lo bet'otr'ediłt'a xwtl.
In winter is really only when we use the sled.
Ndats'e yeget tr'iyh sanh ti detr'iłdhenh ts'e xek'ah k'w dent'a.
It is similar to how we use the canoe in summer.
Ndats'e xeghwnh detthek ts'en' bet'oxwdiłt'ayi xwtl.
In all kinds of ways the sled is useful.
Xwyontha: chuk'w dhedlo.
It is very valuable.

Teltsiyh ti łoʼets'e baxudhtroth.
Making it is quite difficult.

K'iyh nideneghadltenh dinot
While the birch is still frozen,
k'iyh ghwnh netr'eɬneyh ti, ɬo'ets'e xaxudhtroth.
when we work on the birch, it is really difficult.
Inhde yeget letsiyh tl'oghenh lo kan' beghoda duɬ eɬ.
But after it is made, it is easy (to get) firewood by that means.
Yegu niɬdhot de nelani eɬ beghoda dena ghwnh ninoch'ededex.
From far away places, by that means, meat is brought back for people.
Bathdenh da' xeɬdi' ɬo'ets'en' tr'oxutlagą.
It is no good to be without one.
Xwtl chwx, xwtl tsetl'ą eɬ lo k'w
A big sled, and a little sled, now,
ts'iɬk'enh koxt'ana xwtl t'anh.
a person has one of each.
Notik'a xwtl lo k'w ts'iɬ koxt'ana ts'exwyą'.
Each person has two sleds.
Xwtl chwx xeɬdi' beyit notr'etr'etelghwk ts'e xeghenit.
Now the big sled is for hauling things around in.
Xwtl go xeɬdi'
The little sled, on the other hand,
ts'iɬwx yegu zrit k'w tena xeghwnh xwyą' k'w bexulanh.
is just for going quickly along the trail.

Beaded moosehide boots and gloves made by Mabel Charlie.
Photo by Cal White, University Relations, UAF.

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